

intentionally aspired to a community college career, but had had positive experiences with teaching and found it enjoyable. They were attracted to the job because they would not have to pursue tenure, were able to teach without a doctoral degree, and loved teaching (Fugate and Amey, 2000).

There are a number of attributes of the faculty role that are repeatedly found to be important in either keeping people in the role (the “pull” factors) or that “push” people out of the role. The positive pull factors are: autonomy (Daley & Dee, 2006; Hobbs, 2007; NLN, 2005; NEA, 2002;); having a flexible schedule that is family friendly (NLN; Hobbs, 2007); having a competitive salary (August & Waltman, 2004; Hagedorn, 2000); the work itself (Hagedorn, 2000); having a supportive relationship with the department chairperson (August & Waltman; Gormley, 2003; Hagedorn, 2000); institutional factors such as administrative support, technical support and professional regard (Hagedorn, 2000; Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002); career benefits and professional development activities (Hagedorn, 2000; Rosser, 2004); communication openness (Daley & Dee, 2006; Sarmiento et al, 2004); and student quality (Hagedorn, 2000). In addition to these, a recent study of nursing faculty from the NLN (2005) found that a desire to shape the profession, having received encouragement from others to become a teacher, and being in an intellectually stimulating environment were also important factors for entering and/or staying in the faculty role.

One of the primary factors that pushes all types of faculty away from their positions is salary (NEA Study, 2002). Higher pay in the clinical sector compared to education is identified in the literature as a dissatisfier for faculty in radiation therapy, dentistry and nursing (Swafford & Legg, 2007; Schenkein & Best, 2001; NLN, 2005). Workload is another factor that pushes people out of the role, cited by faculty in all fields (Daley & Dee, 2006) as well as in nursing (NLN, 2005; Siler & Kleiner, 2001), as is a lack of administrative and collegial support (August & Waltman, 2004; Glass, 2007; Swafford & Legg, 2007). Nurses, and other professionals, also have other job opportunities outside of education, making them question continuance in a faculty position (Daley & Dee, 2006; Hessler & Ritchie, 2006).

A limited amount of research has been done on how those outside of the faculty role view the positive and negative aspects of nursing education. Brendtro and Hegge (2000) discovered that nurse leaders in clinical settings would only be drawn into faculty positions if the pay was improved, they were in close proximity to work, they could continue their clinical practice while teaching, and if there were more realistic professional expectations. A state-level study of nursing leaders in both clinical and education settings found that the primary factors keeping nurses from entering into faculty positions were salaries and the quality of both students and nursing education programs (Colorado Center for Nursing Excellence, 2004).

Current Faculty

Methodology

Under the assumption that RNs currently serving as faculty have ready access to the Internet, we employed a web-based survey to gather information about the factors that influenced their choice of an academic career, both in the past and in the present, as well as information about their educational background, their faculty career, and their personal demographics. A random sample of current faculty was drawn from a list of all faculty employed by nursing education programs in North Carolina that had an entry-level program as of October, 2007. This list is collected each year by the North Carolina Board of Nursing as part of their annual